

They have awarded us a green building grant.

They have hosted national and regional training conferences that my staff and I have attended.

They publish a very informative quarterly magazine on rural affordable housing issues. They publish a frequent online newsletter that keeps us informed of timely issues.

HAC is an organization that deserves congressional support and I again thank you for that support.

Thank you also for your outstanding leadership on housing issues and your creation of the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus.

Sincerely,

ANNE PERKINS,

Director of Homeownership Programs.

To: Representative Hinojosa

From: Debbie Gass

Date: August 29, 2006

Subject: H.R. 5896—Housing Assistance Council (HAC).

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HINOJOSA: Thank you for writing and introducing H.R. 5896, which will authorize funding support for the Housing Assistance Council (HAC). Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc. (SMTCCAC, Inc.) has worked with the Housing Assistance Council for many years. HAC assists non-profit organizations such as ours build affordable housing. Our experience with HAC has always resulted in a positive experience. Without HAC we would have been unable to build many of our affordable homeownership units in Southern Maryland.

Over the last 30 years, our agency has built over 350 self-help homeownership units and over 250 rental units for low income families. Without HAC, this would have been an impossible task for us. We would not have had access to necessary capital to finance site development and it would be necessary to rely on the private lending industry to provide development financing, as well as letters of credits for the bonds. Without having the site improvements in place, there is inadequate equity in the unimproved land and most nonprofit development organizations do not have the necessary security to offer the bank, making it necessary for the non-profit to place cash on deposit in addition to offering up the land as security. This adds tremendous cost to the project and ultimately to the improved lot. HAC has provided SMTCCAC, Inc. with many low interest loans to finance these developments/lots therefore, keeping the cost to the low-income family affordable.

Thank you also for your outstanding leadership on housing issues and your creation of the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus. I hope that you will continue to support the Housing Assistance Council and their efforts to provide financing to non-profit organizations and assist families in obtaining the American dream of homeownership.

Sincerely,

DEBRA A. GASS,
SMTCCAC, Inc.,
Program Director.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. SCHMIDT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO PERISHED

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take Mr. DEFAZIO's time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, across America yesterday, we paused to honor the innocent Americans who perished 5 years ago on 9/11. A memorial day is a time for reflection. It also can be a time for action.

As a doctor, I know that grief can be debilitating, but it can also be motivating. There is something America can do to transform our grief into positive action.

Right now, half a world away, there is incomprehensible pain and suffering going on in Darfur. Imagine human suffering on a scale 150 times worse than 9/11. Over 470,000 people in Darfur have gone hungry for the last 3 months. They are cut off from humanitarian aid. They are innocent victims in the middle of what can be described either as genocide or homicide.

The estimates range from 200,000 to half a million innocent people who have been slaughtered in just 3 years. That is the equivalent of a 9/11 attack every single week for 3 full years. That level of death and suffering in our world today might be incomprehensible except that it is happening. It is a reality.

Peacekeepers from the African Union have slowed the genocide, but they are slated to leave Darfur at the end of the month. No one doubts the killing will resume if the Sudanese Government is left without an outside force attempting to restrain them. Unless we intervene, there will be 200, 300, who knows how many times 9/11s in Darfur, to people just as innocent as the Americans who perished 5 years ago.

It is true that the United Nations passed a resolution last month calling for a new peacekeeping force in Darfur, but the Sudanese Government responsible for the killings must approve deployment of these peacekeepers. Nothing more than lip service is going to occur unless we lead the world in demanding an end to the killings, backed up by a multinational force that can finally protect innocent people.

Last year, I and other Members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, traveled to the Sudan. We visited camps along the border with Chad and met countless refugees. These were people who lost their homes, belongings, and loved ones. Everything.

A corrupt government says these are people guilty of being born with a certain color of skin and into a particular

tribe. Punishment for innocence is death.

The world has seen this before. We know what to do; we simply aren't doing it. The number of innocent people literally starving to death in Darfur is 150 times the number of Americans who perished during 9/11. Humanitarian aid cannot reach them, and that is the situation with soldiers from the African Union attempting to enforce a peace. What chance do these people have if modest peacekeeping efforts disappear at the end of September?

First and foremost, the President should declare Darfur a global crisis and reinforce such a position with diplomacy aimed at uniting the world against evil. Other nations are better positioned diplomatically to demand that the Sudanese Government pay attention.

In close cooperation with other governments, we should do everything from establishing a no-fly zone to keep Sudanese helicopter gunships grounded to serving notice on the Sudanese Government that innocent people should not be starved to death.

Before 9/11, crises as far away as Sudan perhaps didn't find much room in the American consciousness. Post-9/11, we cannot help but see that death, poverty, and injustice anywhere in the world affects those of us who live in the United States.

Yesterday across America, we stopped to remember 9/11. In Darfur, we can honor the Americans who died on 9/11 by preventing tens of thousands of innocent people in Darfur from dying right before our eyes. We have 21 days to unite the world against attacks as horrifying as 9/11. This can be a defining moment for our Nation. I hope the President sees it as just that and acts before it is too late.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 994, EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF TERRORIST ATTACKS LAUNCHED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-646) on the resolution (H. Res. 996) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 994) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks launched against the United States on September 11, 2001, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2965, FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES COMPETITION IN CONTRACTING ACT OF 2006

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report